

Seattle Design Commission

Approved

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

April 20 2006

Gregory J. Nickels,
Mayor

David Spiker
Chair

Pam Beyette

Adam Christiansen

John Hoffman

Karen Kiest

Anindita Mitra

Sheri Olson

Nic Rossouw

Dennis Ryan

Darrell Vange

Guillermo Romano
Executive Director

Layne Cubell,
Senior Staff

Projects Reviewed

Planning Division Update
Swedish Medical Center
Commission Business

Commissioners Present

David Spiker, Chair
Pam Beyette
Adam Christiansen
John Hoffman
Karen Kiest
Anindita Mitra
Sheri Olson
Nic Rossouw
Dennis Ryan
Darrell Vange

Convened: 9:30am

Adjourned: 2:30pm

Staff Present

Guillermo Romano
Layne Cubell
Tom Iurino
Valerie Felts



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Development

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20 Apr 2006 Project: Commission Business

Phase: Staff Discussion
Presenters: Commission staff
Time: 1/2 hour

(SDC Ref. # 168)

Summary

The Commission reviewed its approach to large City projects. These include: the Viaduct/Central Waterfront Project, Colman Dock, King Street Station, Westlake Hub, Light Rail, SR520, Mercer Corridor, and the SLU Streetcar. The Commission also reviewed and approved an Action Plan for increasing its involvement in the coming months in Viaduct and Waterfront Outreach activities.

It was suggested that the Design Commission should allow more time to review large City projects to absorb their complexity and ask critical, important questions. The majority of the Commission believes they have struck the right balance and provide meaningful input on complex projects in the course of regular meetings, recognizing that the Commission is but one voice in the review of large projects. Keeping local officials apprised of the Commission's advice remains a key concern. The Commission does its best to balance review of large and small projects in all parts of the city, responding to all CIP departments. The idea and feasibility of establishing a transportation commission was discussed as most of the large projects that come before the Commission now are related to transportation infrastructure. It has been discussed in prior years, as well, and recently at the Commission's annual retreat. The Commission agreed its role is advisory, and as such should not take too long in finalizing its recommendations, but to be more effective on large, complex projects, the Commission agreed it should focus on salient design issues of projects, not engineering and/or environmental details. Staff will ask project teams to focus their presentations on design aspects and identify issues and key questions for the Commission's input.

Following on a discussion from last meeting, the Commission continued to review a proposed action plan and menu of options outlined by staff for stepping up their involvement in public outreach activities on two related projects: the Alaskan Way Viaduct/Seawall and the Central Waterfront Plan. The Commission has actively reviewed both projects at regular intervals over the last several years. Increasing public interest and upcoming key decisions by City Council provide an opportunity for the Commission to make its record of opinion on these projects more widely known.

04 Apr 2006 Project: DPD Division Update

Phase: bi-monthly Briefing
Previous Reviews: n/a
Presenters: John Rahaim, Department of Planning and Development
Steve Moddemeyer, Seattle Public Utilities

Time: 1 hour

(SDC Ref. # 220)

Summary

The Commission thanks John Rahaim for the update on the Planning Division, specifically recent legislative changes and their implications for comprehensive planning in the city. It also thanks Steve Moddemeyer for joining John today and supports his development of the Seattle Green Factor, an innovative scorecard for calculating landscape improvements, in working with developers and encourages its use and implementation throughout the City.

John Rahaim provided updates on recent legislative actions on downtown zoning and shoreline management. Both were long in development and are major hallmarks for the future of planning in the city.

The Commission discussed their involvement in large city projects, highlighting several transportation projects. The Commission will step up its review of Colman Dock this year and several Commissioners have volunteered for recent workshops related to that project and a Commission representative will likely be on the new Citizens Advisory Group (CAG). The Commission continues to be interested in the next phase of the Central Waterfront Plan and welcomes the opportunity to review the scope for the Public Realm RFQ and participate on the consultant selection panel for this important project. The Commission continues to review the SR 520 Improvement project and one Commissioner, Nic Rossouw, sits on the project's Technical Committee. He reported that at a recent meeting, there was discussion of local environmental groups' disagreement with WSDOT concerning environmental impacts of the SR 520 project, specifically on water quality. He also noted that the project is contrary to environmental goals and policies of the Kyoto Protocol, especially the City's need to reduce auto dependency. There was discussion of the possible need of a city Transportation Commission, as the Design Commission is increasingly pressed into service to review these projects which are large and very complex, but it was pointed out this was unlikely to be established anytime soon.

Steve Moddemeyer outlined use and implementation prospects of the Seattle Green Factor program. Modeled after similar programs in Berlin and Malmö, Sweden, it utilizes a scorecard system in lieu of prescriptive code requirements to encourage developers to plant landscaping such as trees, lawns, and/or green roofs. The Commission was enthusiastic in its support for bringing such innovative thinking and a more logical approach that focuses on the overall quality of landscape improvements to private and public development projects.

**20 Apr 2006 Project: Swedish Medical Center Orthopedic Institute –
Cherry Street Skybridge**

Phase: Skybridge Petition Follow Up
Previous Reviews: February 2006
Presenters: Tom Berger, Berger Partnership
Jose Sama, NBBJ
Tom Walsh, Foster Pepper LLC
Attendees: Darren Redick, Swedish Medical Center
Kristina Ryhn, NBBJ
Diane Lasko, NBBJ
Vince Vergel De Dios, NBBJ
Anita Madtes, Berger Partnership
Ruri Yampolsky, Seattle Office of Arts & Cultural
Affairs

Time: 1-1/2 hours

(SDC Ref. # 170)

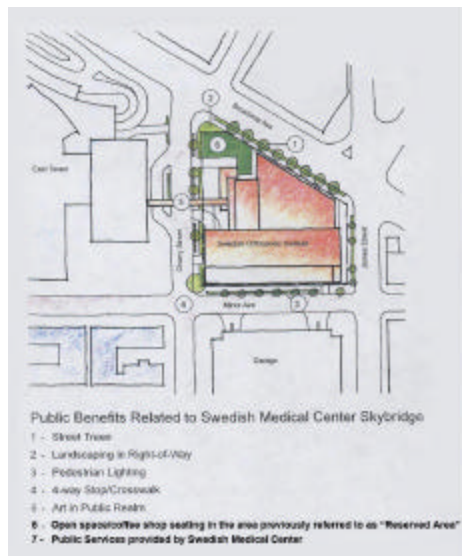
Action

The Commission thanks the Swedish Orthopedic Institute design team for their presentation and appreciates the clear and direct response the team has made to issues the Commission brought up at the last meeting. The Commission also appreciates the increased emphasis on the pedestrian environment and reduced emphasis on the automobile footprint on the site. The Commission recommends approval of the public benefits package as presented subject to the following comments and recommendations :

- recommends that the three distinct open spaces at the site be designed with an integrated plan and that the spaces relate well to one another
- recommends that Swedish allow City's art and cultural affairs office to review the art program proposals and that they include a professional public artist in the selection process
- applauds Swedish's pledge of a \$100,000 art program and encourages it to be spent on distinct tangible treatments and elements, not to fortify architectural treatments.
- suggests the lawn area may also be an appropriate location for an art element and not necessarily the skybridge itself
- Supports plan for the extensive landscape beds in the sidewalks both as pedestrian buffers and added impervious surfaces
- understands the rationale for removing the Elm tree instead of removing the garage access, but wants to ensure that it is replaced with appropriate Elm species such as the Liberty Elm
- suggests team consider adding a pathway along the west edge of the corner lawn area on Cherry St. to better connect the entry plaza on Broadway with Cherry St.
- agrees on minimizing the size of the skybridge and is generally satisfied with the skybridge element and its design treatment

Proponents Presentation

In response to Design Commission recommendations at an earlier review, the proponents presented a revised public realm/streetscape scheme. New public benefits include an *Art in the Public Realm* program for which Swedish has committed \$100,000 toward development of art. Artist proposals will be reviewed and selected by the Swedish Art Committee. Possible types of art considered include: exterior art in the vicinity of the building entrance on Cherry St. such as sculpture or artistic scrims; glass etching in the skybridge, visible from street level; or artistic treatment of the skybridge columns.



A plaza and green space at the corner of Cherry and Broadway will consist of 4,400 sq. ft. of landscape. Landscaping in the right-of-way will be designed to create a sense of welcome while offering pedestrian separation from vehicular traffic. Other efforts to improve the pedestrian experience by maintaining a sense of openness on the Cherry St. side of the building with natural daylight were described. Nighttime visibility would be improved with the addition of lighting at the NE corner of Minor and James Sts. Twelve existing street trees will be retained at the site and thirteen will be added. Concern over removal of a large Elm

tree to accommodate placement of the garage entrance was addressed. A transportation engineer concluded that moving the entrance, thus retaining the tree, would not be recommended.



Skybridge rendering looking west on Cherry Street

An overview of skybridge design goals was presented. It will provide a safe, direct route between the existing Swedish First Hill main campus buildings and the new Orthopedic Institute, both for patients transported from the Emergency Department and medical personnel. The bridge will connect to the new building in a logical and organized way that will facilitate wayfinding.

Materials such as translucent glass incorporated into the bridge will provide visual privacy for patients without making the bridge appear heavy and solid. Depth of the bridge will be minimized both visually and structurally. Columns on Swedish property on each side of the street will help facilitate a shallow profile. The bridge connects to the main campus at the South Wing Building, which is a heavily articulated precast concrete structure. Materials used where the bridge connects to the new building are glass and metal paneling. An open space/coffee shop seating area will provide public open space at the corner of Cherry St. and Broadway. This space would be available to the public.



Rendering of Proposed Enhanced Lighting at Northeast Corner of James and Minor

Commissioner Questions and Comments

- Of the number of trees, and landscaping in right-of-way, how much is required by SDOT?
 - The project exceeds street tree requirements by 1 over code; driveway landscaping is not required
- Regarding the large Elm tree, it was planted in the 1920s and may have reached post-maturity. It is a great idea to test new (Elm) trees that are design resistant.
 - The team is looking for the most disease-resistant Elm to replace it
- What is the surface of the big open corner made of?
 - More important than what it is made of in terms of use, it could be grass and be effective as a lawn. Because of the inclining portion of the space and trying to create a pedestrian friendly space, the team would prefer using grass than ground cover, which would exclude such use.
- Please talk about artist selection
 - The Swedish Art Committee is in talks with OACA to identify artists. We hope to locate an individual experienced with public art.
- The Commission recommends putting a public artist or public art professional on art committee; also consider the possibility of an *earthworks* art project in the open space
 - The square is 2100 sq. ft. in size, plus 750 sq. ft. of greenspace and concrete
- Why is the skybridge so wide? (12 ft.)
 - It needs to be to transport patients with ease 24 hours

- What are the hours of the new Cherry street plaza?
 - 6:00am to 9:00 pm are the hours the plaza will be open to the public
- Clarify what is in the public realm and what Swedish provides to the public. It looks like little money has been spent on open space/grass
 - It is lawn space, people can use it. The landscaped green edge changes the character of Broadway, it gives a sense of protection from traffic to the public
- SDOT: The columns of the bridge seem to be on the sidewalk. Are they in the Right of Way?
 - No, they are on private property

20 Apr 20 2006 Project**Commission Business****Action Items****A.** Timesheets**B.** Minutes from 04/06/06/Felts**DISCUSSION ITEMS****C.** Outside commitments update/All**D.** Council meetings update/Cubell**ANNOUNCEMENTS****E.** Maya Lin Exhibit Reception, Henry Museum, April 21, 9-11pm**F.** Capitol Hill Housing Panel Discussion, April 24, 6:30pm**G.** Colman Dock EIS Scoping Session, April 25, 4:30-6:30pm